United Nations E/C.2/2004/2/Add.5

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
22 April 2004
English
Original: Spanish

Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations
2004 regular session
10-28 May 2004

Quadrennial reports for the period 1998-2001, submitted through the Secretary-General pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31

Note by the Secretary-General

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04-32287 (E) 280504 280504

Organization for the Solidarity of the Peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America*

(Special consultative status granted in 1998)

Introduction

The Organization for the Solidarity of the Peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America (OSPAAAL) is an international non-governmental organization that was founded on 15 January 1966. Its 36 years of work confirm that its main objective is the defence of the solidarity existing among the peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America and promoting actions and initiatives that strengthen friendship, understanding, cooperation and unity among third world nations in relation to their rights to independence, sovereignty, self-determination and territorial integrity.

The main themes of these initiatives and actions relate to programmes, resolutions and other legal and political instruments adopted by the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and other organs of the United Nations system. These themes include: eradicating colonialism and other forms of oppression; defending national identity; respect for human rights in their comprehensive and indivisible aspects; peacekeeping and promoting solutions to regional conflicts; defending the right to social development; confronting neoliberal practices; eradicating poverty; abolishing all forms of racial, gender and ethnic discrimination, xenophobia and all forms of exclusion; and protecting women's and children's rights.

The organization has 56 member organizations in 46 countries and is directed by an international Executive Secretariat, composed, on the basis of equitable geographic distribution, of organizations from Angola, Chile, Congo, Cuba, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Guatemala, Guinea, Palestine, Puerto Rico, South Africa, the Syrian Arab Republic and Viet Nam, where the General Secretariat is located.

OSPAAAL self-finances its activities through voluntary donations from its members, occasional donations from organizations and other institutions with which it collaborates, and sales of its magazine and other political materials. It publishes the magazine *Tricontinental* in Spanish and English, with a print run of 3,000 copies; the digital version may be found at the web site: www.tricontinental.cubaweb.cu.

Participation in the Economic and Social Council, its subsidiary bodies and other United Nations conferences:

1998

Vienna Plus Five Global NGO Forum on Human Rights, organized by Canada's Human Rights Internet, in coordination with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Canadian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ottawa, 22-24 June. In September, the editorial team for the final

* Issued without formal editing.

document submitted by the Latin American and Caribbean Group on Written Contributions to the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the High-level International Intergovernmental Event on Financing for Development began advising the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat.

1999

Fifty-fifth session of the Commission on Human Rights, Geneva, 31 March-16 April. Oral statements were made on agenda items 9, 10, 11, 12 and 14.

2000

Fifty-sixth session of the Commission on Human Rights, Geneva, 28 March-14 April. Oral statements were made on agenda items 9, 10 and 11 and a joint statement was made on item 12 of the agenda of the Millennium Forum, held in New York from 22 to 26 May. The organization took part in the process of regional thematic consultations and a joint written contribution was submitted by Cuban and international non-governmental organizations with headquarters in Cuba. A representative was not sent because a visa to enter the United States of America was not authorized in time.

Special session of the General Assembly on the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and further initiatives, Geneva, 26-30 June. A joint written contribution was submitted by Cuban and international non-governmental organizations with headquarters in Cuba.

2001

Forum of the Americas for Diversity and Pluralism, in preparation for the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, Ecuador, 13-16 March.

Fifty-seventh session of the Commission on Human Rights, Geneva, 24 March-15 April.

Oral statements were made on agenda items 9, 11 and 14, and joint ones were made on agenda items 8 and 10 of the NGO World Forum and World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, Durban, 27 August-7 September. A joint written contribution was submitted by Cuban and international non-governmental organizations with headquarters in Cuba and oral statements were made on the theme of reparations and compensation and at the special session on Palestine and condemnation of Zionism as a form of racism.

2002

Rio plus 10 Preparatory Forum, Porto Alegre, Brazil, 28-29 January. Fifty-eighth session of the Commission on Human Rights, Geneva, 27 March-10 April. Joint oral statements were made on agenda items 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 (delays in the programme affected the individual contributions of non-governmental organizations). World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, 19 August-4 September. A joint written contribution was submitted by Cuban and international non-governmental organizations with headquarters in Cuba.

Cooperation with the United Nations and its specialized agencies

The organization has a long history of active participation and cooperation in the work of the Division for Palestinian Rights and the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. In close collaboration with both, it organized the first and second International Conferences in Solidarity with the Palestinian People in Athens and Mexico, in 1999 and 2002, respectively. OSPAAAL representatives have been invited as experts to meetings of the Committee in Athens (May 2000), Madrid (July 2001) and New York (September 2002). OSPAAAL was chosen by the Committee to coordinate, chair and head the drafting group for the programme of action of the NGO Workshop with which the United Nations Latin American and Caribbean Meeting on the Question of Palestine, held in Havana from 12 to 16 June 2001, concluded.

OSPAAAL cooperated with the Group of 77 and was the organizer and host, together with three Cuban non-governmental organizations, of the international Forum on "NGOs of the South and the challenges of globalization", which preceded the South Summit held in Havana in March 2000.

The organization participated in the panel of non-governmental organizations as part of the programme of the Regional Seminar of the Committee on Decolonization, held in Havana from 23 to 25 May 2001. An oral statement was made relating to the cases of Puerto Rico and Western Sahara.

Representatives of the organization have actively participated in the four International Meetings of Economists on Globalization and Development Problems, organized annually (since 1999) by the National Association of Cuban Economists (ANEC), in coordination with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the World Health Organization, the Pan American Health Organization, the Economic and Social Council, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the World Bank. The editor of the organization's magazine, *Tricontinental*, was the spokesperson at those meetings.

Other relevant activities

Other conferences, international seminars and activities convened and organized by OSPAAAL

1998

Regional meeting on "Central America and the Caribbean: emigration and human rights", in coordination with the Commission for the Defence of Human Rights in Central America (CODEHUCA), Guatemala City, 15-16 May.

Meeting of the Executive Secretariat with African diplomatic representatives on the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), 22 May.

International workshop on the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, organized by Cuban and international non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council with headquarters in Cuba, Havana, 24-25 September.

1999

"Africa in the OSPAAAL", poster exhibition on the thirty-sixth anniversary of OAU, 27 May.

Reception for the Prime Minister of Guinea-Bissau, OSPAAAL headquarters, 13 September.

2000

Meeting to commemorate the fifty-fifth anniversary of the Arab League, 24 March.

Cultural evening on the thirty-seventh anniversary of OAU, in coordination with Africa House, Cuba, 19 May.

2001

Special high-level session of the OSPAAAL Executive Secretariat on the thirty-fifth anniversary of the organization, Havana, 15-21 January.

Meeting of the Executive Secretariat with African diplomatic missions on the thirty-eighth anniversary of OAU (29 May), and contribution to the exhibition on African culture.

2002

Meeting of the Executive Secretariat with African diplomatic missions on the thirty-ninth anniversary of OAU, 31 May.

Participation in international conferences and seminars organized by other organizations and institutions (including oral statements)

1998

Fourth International Seminar on Peace, Natural Resources, Sovereignty and Society, organized by the regional office of the World Peace Council (WPC), Havana, 12-14 March.

International workshop on "Structural adjustment in Africa", organized by the Centre for Studies on Africa and the Middle East (CEAMO), Havana, 1-2 April.

International Encounter of Solidarity Among Cuban Women (FMC), with participation by the reporting group of the commission on women, sovereignty, national independence and solidarity, Havana, 10-13 April.

Symposium on "Africa and the Future", organized by CEAMO, Havana, 26 May.

International round table on "The Asian financial crisis", organized by the Centre of Asian and Oceanic Studies (CEAO), Havana, 4 June.

Second international symposium on "The Arab presence in America", organized by the Arab Union of Cuba, Havana, 10-12 September.

Fifth Seminar on "Current problems in Africa and the Middle East", organized by CEAMO, Havana, 18-20 November.

1999

North-South Meeting for Reflection and Solidarity, Dominican Republic, 5-7 November. Sixth seminar on "Current problems in Africa and the Middle East", organized by CEAMO, Havana, 24-26 November.

Second International Meeting on Cooperation with Cuba, organized by the Center for European Studies (CEE), Havana, 7-10 December.

2000

Third seminar on international relations, on "Latin American and Caribbean perspectives in the twenty-first century", organized by the Higher Institute of International Relations (ISRI), Havana, 26-28 April.

"Toward Latin American integration and unity", workshop organized by the Association for the Unity of Our America, Havana, 10-12 July.

Seventh seminar on "Current problems in Africa and the Middle East", organized by CEAMO, Havana, 22-24 November.

2001

The first World Social Forum, Porto Alegre, Brazil, 25-30 January.

Second Meeting of the Peoples of the Caribbean, Dominican Republic, 19-22 April.

Fourth seminar on international relations, on "Regionalism, globalization and the world order", organized by ISRI, Havana, 25-27 April.

International seminar on "Ethics, culture, development, international law and the United Nations", organized by the United Nations Association of Cuba (ACNU), Havana, 16-18 May.

International conference on the challenges of globalization, organized by OSPAAAL-Solidarity, Madrid, 18-20 May.

Fifteenth World Festival of Youth and Students, Algiers, 8-16 August.

International seminar on "Drug trafficking: a threat to peace", organized by the regional office of the World Peace Council, Havana, 6-18 November.

2002

Second World Social Forum, Porto Alegre, Brazil, 31 January-5 February.

International symposium on Asia and the Pacific, organized by the Centre of Asian and Oceanic Studies, Havana, 20 and 21 March.

Fifth seminar on international relations, on "The first war of the twenty-first century: international implications", organized by ISRI, Havana, 25-27 April.

Seminar on "World hunger and the Outcome of the World Food Summit: five years later", organized by the United Nations Association of Cuba, Havana, 18 July.